

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 13, 2004. Claims 1 to 20 are in the application, with Claims 1, 16, and 19 being independent. Claims 3, 8 to 12, 17, and 18 were withdrawn from consideration pursuant to an election of species requirement. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 13, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over U.S. Patent No. 4,274,044 (Barre) in view of U.S. Publication No. 2001/0035180 (Kimura). Claims 4 to 7, 15, 19, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Barre in view of Kimura and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,515,218 (Shimizu). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 1 and 16 recite, *inter alia*, a plurality of power conversion devices (or a plurality of DC-DC converters) individually connected to a single solar cell element. Claim 19 recites, *inter alia*, connecting a plurality of power conversion devices to predetermined portions of a solar cell element.

The Office Action concedes that Barre does not disclose the foregoing features. Yet, placing reliance on Kimura, the Office Action asserts that the invention would nevertheless have been obvious. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Kimura merely discloses that it is known to incorporate a boosted type DC-DC converter (80a, 80b) into each solar cell module or into each solar cell string. See paragraph [0013] and Fig. 17 of Kimura. Nowhere is Kimura seen to teach or suggest connecting a plurality of these DC-DC converters to a single solar cell element.

Shimizu is not seen to remedy the deficiencies of Barre and Kimura.

Dependent Claims 2, 4 to 7, 13 to 15, and 20 are also submitted to be patentable because they set forth additional aspects of the present invention and are dependent from the independent claims discussed above. Therefore, separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 is believed to be generic to the species in non-elected Claims 3, 8 to 12, and 18, and Claim 16 is believed to be generic to the species in Claim 17. Accordingly, examination of Claims 3, 8 to 12, and 18 is respectfully requested once Claim 1 receives an indication of allowability, and examination of Claim 17 is respectfully requested once Claim 16 receives an indication of allowability. See MPEP § 806.04(d).

Included with the August 12, 2004 Office Action was an initialed copy of sheet 1 of the Form PTO-1449 which accompanied the May 4, 2004 Information Disclosure Statement. However, Applicants note that the PTO-1449 contains two sheets. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner return an initialed copy of sheet 2 of the Form PTO-1449. A copy of sheet 2 is enclosed, for the Examiner's convenience.

No other matters being raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa,
California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to
our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Damond E. Vadnais", is written over a horizontal line.

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